

## Appendix – Glossary of Terms

**Alternative Service Delivery:** refers to the range of models through which service delivery to customers may be managed. It transforms how government services and operations are delivered through strategic partnerships with the private sector.

Alternative Service Delivery solutions help to:

- drive cost savings or avoid future costs — such as capital required to build new systems;
- enhance service levels;
- increase private sector involvement in the delivery of services, thereby allowing government to focus on its core business;
- access innovation, creativity and specialized private sector resources;
- support economic development and growth in British Columbia; and
- ensure appropriate allocation of risk.

Some examples of Alternative Service Delivery are: outsourcing; public-private partnerships (P3s); and shared services.

The Alternative Service Delivery Project Secretariat focuses on providing overall governance to transformational projects (such as outsourcing arrangements) and on transferring knowledge and skills to ensure that government has the capability to handle sophisticated Alternative Service Delivery initiatives.

**Benchmarking:** the continuous process of measuring products, services, and practices against strong competitors or recognized industry leaders. It is an ongoing activity that is intended to improve performance and can be applied to many facets of operation. Benchmarking requires a measurement mechanism so that the performance “gap” can be identified. It focuses on comparing best practices among similar enterprises.

**Broadband:** broadband technology refers to high-speed Internet access, which makes it possible to send text, video and voice by cable, digital subscriber line, fibre optics, or wireless connections. It eliminates waiting for dial-up connections and greatly improves the efficiency and ease-of-using the Internet.

**Broader Public Sector:** other levels of government (federal and municipal governments) and other public sector agencies that provide services. These include regional health authorities, schools and universities, and provincial Crown corporations.

**Carbon Neutral:** Carbon neutrality is a process of continuous improvement intended to reduce the negative effects of an organization’s GHG emissions. The process involves:

- Measuring the organization’s GHG emissions
- Taking steps to reduce its emissions wherever possible
- Netting to zero, remaining emissions through offsets – investments in emission reductions elsewhere (e.g., in solar or wind energy technologies outside the provincial public sector).

**Channels:** routes used by citizens, businesses and visitors to access communications — generally telephone, in person or via the Internet.

**Client (see also customer):** the decision-maker for a public sector organization that purchases the service solutions offered by the Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services.

Examples of clients include: ministries that purchase common information technology services, payroll services, financial and business applications services and procurement and supply services.

**Climate Change:** "Climate change" can mean a change in climate due to natural or human (anthropogenic) causes. Increasingly, the term has come to refer specifically to that part of climate variation resulting from human-induced greenhouse gas emissions. Thus, the [United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change](#), in its Article 1, defines climate change as: a change of climate, which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere, and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods.

**Community:** any location in British Columbia with a place name and either a public school, library, or health care facility (as defined by the Premier's Technology Council).

**Customer (see also client):** an individual or end-user who receives a service or product from Citizens' Services. Customers may be members of the public, businesses, or government staff.

Examples of customers include:

- a citizen who visits one of Service BC's offices in a community to enquire about the programs of the Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance; and
- government staff who contact the Shared Services BC Service Desk to resolve an information technology issue, or contact Corporate Accounting Services to track and reconcile payments to vendors.

**Economies of Scale:** the benefit that larger production volumes allow fixed costs to be spread over more units lowering the average unit costs and offering a competitive price and margin advantage. Producing in large volume often generates economies of scale. The per unit cost of material goes down with volume because vendors charge less per unit for larger orders, and often production techniques and facilities cost less per unit as volume increases. Fixed costs are spread over a larger volume.

**e-government:** government activities that take place by digital processes over computer networks, usually the Internet, between the government and members of the public and entities in the private sector, especially regulated entities. These activities generally involve the electronic exchange of information to acquire or provide products or services, to place or receive orders, to provide or obtain information, or to complete financial transactions. The anticipated benefits of e-government include reduced operating costs for government institutions and regulated entities, increased availability since government services can be accessed from virtually any location, and convenience due to round-the-clock availability. In addition, e-government provides direct communications between legislators and their constituents via email.

The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer has developed an e-Government Strategy which includes the e-Government Delivery Framework. This framework illustrates the key elements in the implementation of the e-government plan.

**Governance:** the Government Chief Information Officer establishes the decision-making structure and accountabilities associated with the use of information and information technology across government, including co-ordinating the Information Resource Management Planning process, developing the e-BC Strategy on electronic service delivery, and oversight governance of projects such as bridging the digital divide. In addition, the Government Chief Information Officer has responsibility for the corporate privacy and information access functions of government.

**High Performance (Green) Buildings:** are buildings or facilities that are designed to be environmentally sustainable. They offer superior economic, environmental and social benefits, including: lower operating costs (energy, water, maintenance); enhanced indoor work environments; and efficient use of resources (energy, water, materials).

**Information Management:** the function of managing information as an enterprise resource, including planning, organizing and staffing, leading and directing, and controlling information. Information management includes managing data as the enterprise knowledge infrastructure and information technology as the enterprise information technical infrastructure, and managing applications across business value chains.

**Information Technology:** general term used to describe technologies that help produce, manipulate, store, communicate, or disseminate information, including both hardware and software.

**Multi-lingual Services:** a corporate service delivery approach is being developed to enhance multilingual access to information and services in order to better address the multilingual diversity and, hence, the multicultural diversity of residents of British Columbia. This project is a component of the citizen-centered service delivery initiative.

**Network BC:** this project office was created to respond to the New Era commitment to connect every B.C. community to high-speed broadband.

**Outsourcing:** a form of alternative service delivery. It involves the contracting out of work previously done within an organization to an external service provider specializing in that type of operation/service. It is a business decision that is often made to achieve cost savings/efficiencies or to improve service quality and allow the organization to focus on core functions/competencies.

**Shared Services:** means that all ministries share a common set of internal management services (information technology, payroll, procurement and supply, strategic acquisitions and intellectual property, financial and business applications and real estate and accommodation), rather than duplicating these functions across ministries. Shared services is a “best practice” approach to reducing costs. Creating a shared services organization involves more than consolidation. It includes:

- modifying policies and streamlining processes;
- standardizing processes to leverage expertise;
- using technology to drive out further efficiencies;
- driving continuous improvement; and
- aggregating volumes to achieve economies of scale.

The shared services approach has other characteristics that set it apart as well. Shared services is client-led. Clients are involved in determining the services they want to receive. Shared services organizations value and use input from clients and industry experts to continuously improve service delivery and reduce costs. Generally speaking, governance (rules, policies and regulations) is separated from the delivery of services to ensure the organization focuses on service delivery.